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PASTURE SCHOOL OFFERS HIGH LEVEL OF INTERACTION

The Saskatchewan Pasture School will seek to continue its past sell-out success while adding a fun new contest to build on interactivity in 2008. The fifth annual gathering will take place June 18 and 19 in Saskatoon.

The two-day training event provides a forum in which grazing managers can gain practical knowledge and expand their management skills through seminars, producer panels, hands-on exercises and site visits.

Agenda highlights include sessions on grass growth, grazing management principles, calculating stocking rates, matching grazing animal requirements and forage quality, grazing behavior, the benefits of legumes, and grazing from a business perspective.

Producer panel discussions will be conducted on grazing management practices and tricks of the trade for grassing yearlings.

The Saskatchewan Pasture School traditionally involves pasture tours. This year, the group will visit the Meacham area. "We're going to look at native prairie and discuss how we evaluate what condition it's in," said Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Forage Development Specialist and workshop leader Lorne Klein. The tour will also examine tame forages.

A demonstration of electric fencing will also be featured in the field tour portion. A new component of the Pasture School pits teams of students against each other as they apply their knowledge of fencing.

The tour wraps up with a barbecue supper at Meacham Hall, where a panel of producers will discuss their own grazing operations.

In all, through the various social events, producer presentations and panel discussions, the event provides plenty of opportunities for producers to exchange views and learn from one another.

Organizations involved in the Pasture School include the Saskatchewan Forage Council, the Western Beef Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority.

The 2008 Saskatchewan Pasture School will be held at the Best Western Inn and Suites in Saskatoon.

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Registration is $131.25 for the first registrant and $105 for any additional registrants from the same operation.

Attendance at the Saskatchewan Pasture School is limited to 50 participants, and demand is always high. Organizers will be contacting the people on last year's waiting list first, so the spots will likely fill up quickly. Anyone wanting to participate is encouraged to register soon.

"We certainly encourage participants to register earlier rather than later, or they may be disappointed," said Klein.

A complete agenda and registration form are available online at the Saskatchewan Forage Council website at http://www.saskforage.ca/.

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